

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1-16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A method for producing hydroxylated and/or acetylated steroids, comprising the steps according to which:

- ~~yeasts~~ yeast cells are cultured on a medium comprising at least one precursor of such hydroxylated and/or acetylated steroids, and then
- the hydroxylated and/or acetylated steroids are isolated from the medium after bioconversion,

~~wherein said yeasts are yeasts transformed so as to express the product of the~~  
Cyp7b gene

wherein said precursor is DHEA or pregnenolone;

wherein said yeast cells are of the genus *Saccharomyces*;

wherein said yeast cells are transformed with the rat *Cyp7b* gene so as to express the 7 $\alpha$  hydroxylase enzymatic activity encoded by said rat *Cyp7b* gene which catalyzes 7 $\alpha$  hydroxylation of pregnenolone and DHEA;

wherein said yeast cells are further modified so as to lack an acetyl coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity when compared to wild type yeast cells.

18-19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said precursor contains a ~~7 position which~~ can be hydroxylated at position 7.

21-23. (canceled)

24. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~18~~ 17, wherein the ~~APAT~~ activity of said yeasts has been rendered low or zero by inactivation of the ~~atf2~~ gene or by using an ~~atf2<sup>-</sup> mutant~~ lack of an acetyl coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity results from inactivation of the *atf2* gene encoding said APAT activity or from the use of an *atf2<sup>-</sup>* mutant.

25. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said ~~yeasts also~~ carry yeast cells also produce a protein having dehydrogenase activity.

26. (currently amended) The method of claim 25, wherein said dehydrogenase activity is a ~~17-dehydrogenase activity which produces a 17-hydroxylated derivative~~ 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity which catalyzes the production of a steroid precursor at position 17.

27. (currently amended) The method of claim 26, wherein said ~~17-dehydrogenase~~ 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity is ~~carried~~ encoded by the ~~*yi1124w*~~ *yil124w* gene.

28. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein the ~~47-~~  
~~dehydrogenase activity of said yeasts has been rendered low or zero~~ yeast cells  
further lack a 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity when compared to wild  
type yeast cells.

29. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein said yeasts are  
of the genus *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.

30. (currently amended) The method of claim 17, wherein ~~said~~ the rat  
Cyp7b gene is under the control of a yeast promoter chosen ~~in~~ from the group  
consisting of CYC1, TEF1 and TDH3.

31. (withdrawn) A yeast strain having zero 17-dehydrogenase activity by  
inactivation of the ~~yi1124w~~ yil124w gene.

32. (currently amended) A saccharomyces yeast strain transformed with a  
plasmid comprising ~~an expression cassette expressing the Cyp7b gene~~ the rat  
Cyp7b gene so as to express the 7 $\alpha$  hydroxylase enzymatic activity encoded by said  
rat Cyp7b gene, wherein said yeast strain is further modified so as to lack an acetyl  
coenzyme A-pregnenolone acetyltransferase (APAT) activity when compared to wild  
type yeast cells.

33. (withdrawn) A method preparing a medicinal product for the treatment of diseases of the central nervous system comprising the step of preparing a steroid by the method of claim 17.

34. (new) The method of claim 28, wherein said  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity is that encoded by the *yil124w* gene.

35. (new) The method of claim 34, wherein the lack of a  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity results from inactivation of the *yil124w* gene encoding said  $17\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase activity.

36. (new) The yeast strain of claim 32, wherein said yeast strain is *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*.